

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Amend claims 1, 4, 20-22, 24, and 40, as follows.

**Listing of Claims:**

1                   1. **(Currently amended)** A work-management method  
2 comprising:  
3                   for a future point in time, determining a probability of availability  
4 of each resource of a plurality of resources at said future point in time;  
5 time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the plurality of the  
6 resources;  
7                   combining together the determined probabilities of availability of  
8 the plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the  
9 combining; and  
10                  using the number to schedule new tasks for the resources for  
11 the future point in time.

1                   2. **(Previously presented)** The method of claim 1 wherein:  
2                   using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
3                   scheduling for the future point in time no more than the number  
4 of the new tasks to become available for servicing by the plurality of the  
5 resources.

1                   3. **(Previously presented)** The method of claim 2 wherein:  
2                   combining together the determined probabilities comprises  
3                   summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1                   4. **(Currently amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein:

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2                   determining ~~a~~the probability of availability of each resource  
3   comprises  
4                   determining an amount of time  $t$  that each resource of the  
5   plurality of resources has been servicing a task by now;  
6                   for each of the resources, determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of  
7   the resource servicing its task to completion within a total amount of time  
8    $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
9                   for each of the resources, determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the  
10   resource completing servicing its task by now; and  
11                  for each of the resources, determining a probability  $P$  that the  
12   resource will complete servicing its task at the future point in time the  
13   amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ .

1                   **5. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 4 in a call  
2   center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
5                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate or  
6   cancel an outbound call.

1                   **6. (Previously presented)** A work-management method  
2   comprising:  
3                   determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has been  
4   servicing a task by now;  
5                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the  
6   task to completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount  
7   of time;  
8                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing  
9   servicing the task by now;

10                   determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete  
11   servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ ;  
12   and  
13                   in response to  $P$ , scheduling another task for servicing.

1                   7. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                   scheduling comprises  
3                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate said  
4   another task.

1                   8. **(Previously presented)** The method of claim 6 in a call  
2   center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   scheduling comprises  
5                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate an  
6   outbound call.

1                   9. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 further comprising:  
2                   performing the determining steps for a plurality of resources,  
3   and  
4                   determining a number of the resources that will likely have  
5   completed servicing their respective tasks within the amount of time  $h$   
6   from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for individual ones of  
7   the plurality of resources; wherein  
8                   scheduling comprises  
9                   in response to determining the number of the resources,  
10   scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1                   10. **(Original)** The method of claim 9 wherein:

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2 scheduling tasks for servicing comprises scheduling no more  
3 than the number of the tasks for servicing.

1 11. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2 determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3 obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
4 from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t+h)$ ;  
5 and  
6 determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7 from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t)$ .

1 12. **(Original)** The method of claim 11 wherein:  
2 obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3 obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4 resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1 13. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2 determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3 obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
4 fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime closed-form  
5 cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of the  
6 distribution, and  
7 evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
8 the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$  ; and  
9 determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
10 evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
11 the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1 14. **(Original)** The method of claim 13 wherein:  
2 obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises

3                    obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4    resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
5                    the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
6    distribution; and  
7                    the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
8    parameter of central tendency.

1                    15. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                    determining an amount of time  $t$  comprises  
3                    determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been  
4    servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks; and  
5                    determining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
6                    determining the historical task-completion statistics for the one  
7    type of tasks.

1                    16. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                    scheduling another task comprises  
3                    in response to  $P$  initiating preparation of a task that may require  
4    servicing by an agent at a later time.

1                    17. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                    determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                    obtaining a historical histogram for task completion, and  
4                    evaluating a cumulative said probability with the obtained  
5    histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
6                    determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7                    evaluating the cumulative probability with the obtained  
8    histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1                    18. **(Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:

2 scheduling comprises  
3 in response to *P*, canceling preparation of a task that could  
4 require servicing by a resource.

1 19. (Canceled)

1 20. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium  
2 containing instructions which, when executed in a computer, cause the  
3 computer to perform the steps of:  
4 for a future point in time, determining a probability of availability  
5 of each resource of a plurality of resources at said future point in ~~time~~;  
6 time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the plurality of the  
7 resources;  
8 combining together the determined probabilities of availability of  
9 the plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the  
10 combining; and  
11 using the number to schedule new tasks for the resources for  
12 the future point in time.

1 21. (Currently amended) A work-management apparatus  
2 comprising:  
3 a storage medium for storing instructions, and  
4 a processor for executing the instructions, the medium and the  
5 processor together comprising:  
6 ~~computer~~ means for determining, for a future point in time, a  
7 probability of availability of each resource of a plurality of resources at said  
8 future point in ~~time~~; time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the  
9 plurality of the resources;  
10 ~~computer~~ means cooperative with the determining means for  
11 combining together the ~~determined~~ probabilities of availability of the

12 plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the combining;  
13 and  
14 means cooperative with the means for combining the  
15 determined probabilities, for scheduling ~~for the future point in time~~ no more  
16 than the obtained number of new tasks ~~for servicing~~ to be serviced by the  
17 plurality of the resources at the future point in time.

1 22. **(Currently amended)** A work-management apparatus  
2 comprising:  
3 a storage medium for storing instructions, and  
4 a processor for executing the instructions, the medium and the  
5 processor together comprising:  
6 means for determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has  
7 been servicing a task by now;  
8 ~~computer~~ means cooperative with the time-determining means  
9 for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the task to  
10 completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
11 ~~computer~~ means cooperative with the time-determining means  
12 for determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing the  
13 task by now;  
14 ~~computer~~ means cooperative with both of the probability-  
15 determining means for determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will  
16 complete servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as  
17  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ ; and  
18 means cooperative with the P-determining means and  
19 responsive to  $P$  for scheduling another task for servicing.

1 23. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 21  
2 wherein:

3                   the means for combining together the determined probabilities  
4   comprise  
5                   means for summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1                   **24. (Currently amended)** The apparatus of claim 21 wherein:  
2                   the means for determining atthe probability of availability of  
3   each resource comprise  
4                   means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
5   resources, an amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been servicing a task  
6   by now;  
7                   means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
8   resources, a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing its task to  
9   completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
10                  means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
11   resources, a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing its task  
12   by now; and  
13                  means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
14   resources, a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete servicing its task  
15   at the future point in time the amount of time  $h$  from now as  
16   
$$\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}.$$

1                   **25. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 21 in a  
2   call center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   the means for scheduling comprise  
5                   means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
6   initiate or cancel an outbound call.

1                   **26. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:



3                   the means for scheduling comprise  
4                   means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
5 initiate said another task.

1                   **27. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22 in a  
2 call center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   the means for scheduling comprise  
5                   means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
6 initiate an outbound call.

1                   **28. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2 wherein:  
3                   the means for determining an amount of time  $t$  comprise  
4                   means for determining the amount of time  $t$  for each of a  
5 plurality of resources;  
6                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
7                   means for determining the probability  $F(t+h)$  for each of the  
8 plurality of resources;  
9                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
10                  means for determining the probability  $F(t)$  for each of the  
11 plurality of resources, and  
12                  means for determining a number of the plurality of resources  
13 that will likely have completed servicing their respective tasks within the  
14 amount of time  $h$  from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for  
15 individual ones of the plurality of resources; and  
16                  the means for scheduling comprise  
17                  means responsive to determining the number of the resources,  
18 for scheduling new tasks for servicing.

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1                   29. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 28  
2   wherein:  
3                   the means for scheduling comprise  
4                   means for scheduling no more than the number of the tasks for  
5   servicing.

1                   30. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:  
3                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4                   means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
5                   means for determining the probability  $F(t+h)$  from the obtained  
6   statistics; and  
7                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
8                   means for determining the probability  $F(t)$  from the obtained  
9   statistics.

1                   31. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 30  
2   wherein:  
3                   the means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics  
4   comprise  
5                   means for obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically  
6   spent by resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1                   32. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:  
3                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4                   means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
5                   means for fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime  
6   closed-form cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of  
7   the distribution, and

8 means for evaluating the distribution with the determined  
9 parameters and the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$  ; and  
10 the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
11 means for evaluating the distribution with the determined  
12 parameters and the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1 33. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 32  
2 wherein:  
3 the means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics  
4 comprise  
5 means for obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically  
6 spent by resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
7 the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
8 distribution; and  
9 the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
10 parameter of central tendency.

1 34. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2 wherein:  
3 the means for determining an amount of time  $t$  comprise  
4 means for determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource  
5 has been servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks;  
6 and  
7 the means for determining historical task-completion statistics  
8 comprise  
9 means for determining the historical task-completion statistics  
10 for the one type of tasks.

1 35. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2 wherein:  
3 the means for scheduling another task comprise

4 means responsive to  $P$  for initiating preparation of a task that  
5 may require servicing by an agent at a later time.

1 36. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2 wherein:  
3 the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4 means for obtaining a historical histogram for task completion,  
5 and  
6 means for evaluating a cumulative said probability with the  
7 obtained histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
8 the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
9 means for evaluating the cumulative probability with the  
10 obtained histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1 37. **(Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2 wherein:  
3 the means for scheduling comprise  
4 means responsive to  $P$ , for canceling preparation of a task that  
5 could require servicing by a resource.

1 38. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 20 wherein:  
2 using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
3 scheduling for the future point in time no more than the number  
4 of the new tasks to become available for servicing by the plurality of the  
5 resources.

1 39. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 38 wherein:  
2 combining together the determined probabilities comprises  
3 summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1 40. **(Currently amended)** The medium of claim 20 wherein:

2                   determining atthe probability of availability of each resource  
3   comprises  
4                   for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining an  
5   amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been servicing a task by now;  
6                   for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
7   probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing its task to completion within a  
8   total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
9                   for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
10   probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing its task by now; and  
11                  for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
12   probability  $P$  that the resource will complete servicing its task at the future  
13   point in time the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ .

1                   **41. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 40 for a call  
2   center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
5                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate or  
6   cancel an outbound call.

1                   **42. (Previously presented)** A computer-readable medium  
2   containing instructions which, when executed in a computer, cause the  
3   computer to perform the steps of:  
4                   determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has been  
5   servicing a task by now;  
6                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the  
7   task to completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount  
8   of time;

9                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing  
10 servicing the task by now;  
11                   determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete  
12 servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ ;  
13 and  
14                   in response to  $P$ , scheduling another task for servicing.

1                   **43. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   scheduling comprises  
3                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate said  
4 another task.

1                   **44. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 for a call  
2 center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   scheduling comprises  
5                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate an  
6 outbound call.

1                   **45. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 further  
2 comprising instructions which, when executed in the computer, cause the  
3 computer to perform the steps of:  
4                   performing the determining steps for a plurality of resources,  
5 and  
6                   determining a number of the resources that will likely have  
7 completed servicing their respective tasks within the amount of time  $h$   
8 from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for individual ones of  
9 the plurality of resources; wherein  
10                   scheduling comprises

11                   in response to determining the number of the resources,  
12   scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1                   **46. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 45 wherein:  
2                   scheduling tasks for servicing comprises scheduling no more  
3   than the number of the tasks for servicing.

1                   **47. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
4                   from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t+h)$ ;  
5   and  
6                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7                   from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t)$ .

1                   **48. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 47 wherein:  
2                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3                   obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4   resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1                   **49. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
4                   fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime closed-form  
5   cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of the  
6   distribution, and  
7                   evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
8   the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$  ; and  
9                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
10                  evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
11   the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1           50. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 49 wherein:  
2           obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3           obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4 resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
5           the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
6 distribution; and  
7           the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
8 parameter of central tendency.

1           51. **(Previously presented)** The method of claim 42 wherein:  
2           determining an amount of time  $t$  comprises  
3           determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been  
4 servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks; and  
5           determining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
6           determining the historical task-completion statistics for the one  
7 type of tasks.

1           52. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2           scheduling another task comprises  
3           in response to  $P$  initiating preparation of a task that may require  
4 servicing by an agent at a later time.

1           53. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2           determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3           obtaining a historical histogram for task completion, and  
4           evaluating a cumulative said probability with the obtained  
5 histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
6           determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises



7                   evaluating the cumulative probability with the obtained  
8    histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1                   **54. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   scheduling comprises  
3                   in response to  $P$ , canceling preparation of a task that could  
4    require servicing by a resource.